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THE OBSERVATOR.

On the Siege of the Cittadel of Tournay, *and its Strength. The Juſtice of Providence in ſuffering thoſe impregnable Places to fall into the Hands of the Allies, becauſe of the* French *King's Confidence in them, and his blaſphemous Inſcriptions. On the Talk of renewing the Conferences of Peace, and what the Allies may juſtly demand as Preliminaries. A ſhort Account of the* French *King's miſerable Circumſtances, how Providence has humbl'd him, and ſeems to point out the Way for the Allies to compleat it. The Danger of neglecting it. On the Propoſal of continuing the Duke of* Anjou *ſtill a King.*

From **Saturday**, Auguſt 13. to **Wednesday**, Auguſt 17. 1709.

Country-m. PRAY, Maſter, give me your Opinion of the Siege of the Cittadel of *Tournay*; for I find ſome People are very uneaſy that it holds out ſo long.

Obſ. Thoſe People either don't know, *Roger*, or don't conſider how ſtrong the *French* King has made that Place ſince he took it in 1667. Dr. *Northleigh*, who was in the Place, gives us this Account of it in his Deſcription of the *Spaniſh Netherlands*, That, beſides the other Fortifications added to the Cittadel, it is all min'd underneath by dark and deep Vaults, which are ſo well contriv'd, that they look more like Terraſs-Walks, than Mines: That in the Centre of the Cittadel, there's a Well, whoſe Water is 50 Foot deep, and from the Brink of that Well, there are Balconies which lead to thoſe Mines under Ground; ſo that our Generals have Reaſon to proceed by the Sap, and all other cautious Methods, to ſave their Men, eſpecially ſince the *French* are in no Condition to relieve it.

Country-m. Thus it muſt happen, Maſter, if People will play their Dogs againſt the Bulls Horns.

Obſ. You muſt conſider, *Roger*, that we don't carry on the War alone. We are engag'd with Allies that muſt be ſatisfy'd, and their Advice muſt be taken as to the Methods of puſhing it on. You perceive, by all our Advices, that the States of the *United Netherlands* have their Deputies with the Army, who certainly underſtand the Intereſt of their Country, and adviſe to ſuch Methods as they think moſt proper for it.

Country-m. I commend their Wiſdom, Maſter; but I think other People ought to be as wiſe as they, and mind their own Intereſt in the Proſecution of the common Cauſe, as well as they do theirs.

Obſ. No doubt they do, *Roger*. The regaining of *Flanders* from the *French*, is the Intereſt of all the Confederates, becauſe 'tis a common Barrier to *England*, the *United Provinces*, and the Empire; and tho' I muſt own, and believe 'tis agreed by every Body, that to attack *France* on that ſide, was like playing Dogs againſt a Bull's Horns, yet, ſince Providence has favour'd us with ſurprizing and unexpected Conqueſts in thoſe Parts, we ought to be eaſy. The divine Wiſdom makes it ſelf moſt conſpicuous where human Foreſight is wanting, and has, with Reſpect to our Succeſs in *Flanders*, given a convincing Proof of the Truth of what's advanc'd by the Pſalmiſt, *Except the Lord keep the City, the Watchmen waketh in vain.* The *French* King had made *Liſle* one of the moſt impregnable Places in *Europe*, was at vaſt Expence in its Fortifications, and thought it ſuch a mighty Security to his new Conqueſts, that he order'd theſe blaſphemous Inſcriptions to be put on the new Caſtle or Cittadel he erected there in 1673, *Gentes laudabunt te, et Reges terræ Gloriam tuam.* i. e. *Nations ſhall praiſe thee, and the Kings of the Earth thy Glory:* And another thus, *In ſole poſui Tabernaculum meum.* i. e. *I have plac'd my Tabernacle in the Sun*; Expreſſions which the Pſalmiſt applies to God himſelf. The like blaſphemous Inſcription he plac'd over the Gate of *Philipsburg* in 1666, *viz. Quod ille claudit nemo aperit, idem aperit et nemo claudit.* i. e. *He ſhuts, and none opens, and opens, and none ſhuts*, which is apply'd by the Pſalmiſt to our Saviour. Now, *Roger*, tho' this will not excuſe the Selfiſhneſs of ſome of the Confederates, or the ill Conduct of others, yet the divine Juſtice makes it ſelf evident in ſuffering thoſe impregnable Places to fall into the Hands of the Confederates in ſo ſurprizing a manner, to puniſh *Lewis* the XIVth for his Blaſphemy and Arrogance in aſſuming that Glory to himſelf which was due to God alone, in placing his chief Confidence in his own Power and Conduct, and for having Recourſe to Idols and the pretended Relicts of Saints, inſtead of making his Application to God in his Diſtreſs; and I hope this will be a Caution to the Allies to avoid falling into the like Neglect of God, or Preſumption, and that they will aſcribe the Glory of all their Succeſs to the Almighty, leſt he be provok'd to with-hold his Hand.

Country-m. I perceive by the News, Maſter, that *Lewis* is doing all he can to renew the Conferences about Peace; and ſome People think they are actually begun. Pray give me your Opinion of it.

Obſ. I have told you before, *Roger*, that 'tis his Intereſt to gain Time, to trifle out this Campaign, and put over the approaching Winter, by amuſing the Allies, if he can, with new Propoſals; but we have no Reaſon to think they will liſten to any Thing leſs, than what may prove an effectual Security againſt his chicaning with us any farther: And in my Opinion, *Roger*, but with Submiſſion to better Judgments, we may very juſtly demand, as neceſſary Preliminaries, that he ſhould entirely renounce all Pretenſions that he or any of his Poſterity lay to the *Spaniſh* Monarchy, contrary to the Articles of his own and his Father's Marriage, and the Treaty of the *Pyrenees*; and that he reſtore all the *Spaniſh Netherlands*, and whatever he poſſeſſes in *Alſace* and *Savoy*, that the Allies may be in a Condition, in Caſe he break theſe Preliminaries, to enter his Country on all Sides immediately, without expoſing their Men to be knock'd o' th' Head againſt his Stone Walls, and other Fortifications; for there are a great many ſtill to be taken, before we can enter *France* with Safety.

Country-m. Aye, but, Maſter, that's puſhing the Point too far: The *French* King is not yet reduc'd low enough to grant ſuch Preliminaries.

Obſ. But if he be not low enough to grant them, *Roger*, Providence has rais'd the Allies high enough to demand them; which I take to be a Call to them from Heaven, to do their Utmoſt to humble him.

Country-m. But pray, Maſter, ſatisfy me as to the Grounds of your Opinion.

Obſ. I think, *Roger*, no Man of Thought can deny, but Providence has hitherto fought for us in a very remarkable Manner, and that God has ſtretch'd out his own Arm to humble that blaſphemous Tyrant. Are not the Battels of *Hockſtedt*, *Ramellies*, and *Oudenard*, and the raiſing of the Sieges of *Tu-*

rin

vin and *Barcelona*, ſpeaking Proofs of it? Were not the Confederate Affairs in all thoſe Countries reduc'd very low, before thoſe glorious Events? Was not the taking of *Liſle*, when we were in a Manner beſieg'd our ſelves, and had our Proviſions cut off, the Work of God's own Hand, and a juſt Rebuke to *Lewis* the XIVth for his blaſphemous Inſcription upon the Cittadel? Has not that made the Nations deſpite him, inſtead of praiſing him? And has it not tarniſh'd, inſtead of raiſing his Glory? Was not the Battel of *Wynendale*, the Deliverance of *Bruſſels*, when ready to be ſwallow'd up by the Elector of *Bavaria*, and the Spirit of Terror which made the *French* abandon their Lines on the *Scheld*, without offering to defend them, the Work of Heaven? Has not God ſent a Hornet, or Spirit of Cowardice among his Troops, ever ſince the Battel of *Hochſtedt*? Why ſhould they otherwiſe entrench themſelves behind Lines and Rivers, and ſuffer Places of greateſt Importance to be taken in their View, without offering at any Thing maſculine, as they us'd to do formerly, to relieve them? Is there not a Spirit of Diviſion and Confuſion in his Court and Councils? And ought we not to look upon that as a juſt Retribution from Heaven, for his being an Inſtrument of ſo much Bloodſhed, Calamity, and Diviſions in all the Kingdoms and States of *Europe*? Has not Heaven blaſted all the great Victories and ſtupendious Succeſſes of the King of *Sweden*, on whom the *French* did ſo much rely, and from whoſe Diverſion to the Princes of the *North*, they promis'd themſelves ſo much Advantage? I won't be ſo uncharitable, as to ſay that unfortunate Prince did actually deſign to ſerve *France* in what he did, but, as I have hinted before, Providence ſeem'd to have open'd his Way to do the Proteſtant Religion, and the common Liberties of *Europe*, much greater Service, than he could reaſonably expect to do by purſuing King *Auguſtus* and the Czar ſo cloſe; and we all know, whatever the Sincerity of his Intentions might be, that his Invaſion of *Germany* fill'd the *French* with Hopes, as it did the Confederates with Fear, and retarded the Progreſs of their Arms. There came Wrath upon *Jehoſhaphat*, for aſſiſting *Ahab* and *Aaziah*, two wicked Kings of *Iſrael*; tho' he himſelf was a good and religious Prince, he was reſtuk'd by the Prophet for *helping the Ungodly, and loving them that hated the Lord*; and *Meroz* was curs'd for not coming to the Help of the Lord againſt the Mighty. Upon the whole, *Roger*, ſince Providence ſeems to have deſtin'd the Tyranny of *France* to Deſtruction, by blaſting all that ever abetted or took Part with it, I hope thoſe concern'd to have it pull'd down, will take Care to perform their Parts, leſt the ſame Judgment come upon them, that came upon *Iſrael* for letting *Benhadad*, the *Syrian*, go, whom God had appointed to utter Deſtruction.

County-m. I hope ſo too, Maſter; for I think the Marks of the divine Vengeance are viſible upon the *French* King. The Winter, which was favourable to our Troops while before *Liſle*, turn'd afterwards ſo ſevere in his Dominions, that, according to repeated Advices, it has in a great Meaſure deſtroy'd all the Reſources of his Wealth, or at leaſt has very much diminiſh'd them, *viz.* His Wine, Oyl, Honey, Corn, Fruits, and Silks; and inſtead of that Plenty which he formerly ſo much abus'd, has introduc'd a Famine among his Subjects. His vaſt Treaſures, upon which he rely'd, are ſo much exhauſted, that his chief Bankers are broke, his Merchants cannot anſwer their Bills, his Subjects are unable to pay their Taxes; and inſtead of well-diſciplin'd, veterane, and conquering Troops, his Armies are now compos'd of ſuch raw, diſpirited, and undiſciplin'd Men, as are not able to look an Enemy in the Face: And beſides the Advantages gain'd over him by the Duke of *Savoy* on the Side of *Dauphine*, and the other Confederates in *Flanders*, his Country is plagu'd with inteſtine Commotions, and infectious Diſtempers: So that I hope the Allies will improve thoſe Advantages which God has given them, to ſettle a firm, honourable, and laſting Peace in *Europe*, and reſtore ſuch an equitable Ballance on all ſides, as may, with the Bleſſing of God, prevent the growing up of any new Tyranny from the old Stamp, and by Conſequence the Effuſion of ſo much Chriſtian Blood, as has for above a hundred Years paſt been ſacrific'd to the Idol of arbitrary and lawleſs Power of Princes, and the Bigotry of Eccleſiaſticks of ſeveral Denominations. But I hear ſome People ſay, Maſter, we can never have a ſolid or laſting Peace, without letting the Duke of *Anjou* continue a King; and therefore are for having him ſtill complemented with a Throne and Scepter.

Obj. If nothing will ſerve but a May-pole, *Roger*, let his Grand-father, who gave him the Title, furniſh him wherewith to ſupport it. The Dominions of *France* are large enough to make two or three Kingdoms; on which Occaſion, I ſhall put thoſe who are concern'd, in Mind of what *Charles*, the warlike Duke of *Burgundy*, ſaid to *Commines*, when a great *French* Lord pleaded with him to join his Arms with the King of *France*, and prevent the diſmembering of that Monarchy by the *Engliſh*. *His Lordſhip*, ſays he, *is a mighty Lover of his Country, but I love it better than he; for inſtead of their having one King, I wiſh they had half a Dozen.*

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